FCI Foodgrains in open market

*271. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that rice stocks supplied by Government and released from the FCI godowns are not utilized for the purpose for which it is intended;

(b) whether recently large quantity of rice and wheat supplied by FCI godowns was seized from the private godowns, rice mills and in some other parts of Karnataka;

(c) whether a number of junior officers of Zila Panchayat were arrested and produced before the court and FIRs have been filed; and

(d) whether it is proposed to constitute a high power team to conduct thorough investigations into this matter to expose the culprits engaged in such malpractices?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Government of India makes available foodgrains to States/U.Ts. under various schemes and it is the responsibility of the concerned State/U.T. Governments to ensure that foodgrains allocated reach the ultimate beneficiaries. Occasional reports of misuse have come to the notice of the Government.

(b) The Government of Karnataka have reported that recently nearly 16,679 tonnes of rice were seized at four different godowns at Mangalore and 90.36 tonnes of wheat were seized in Bangalore.

(c) Twenty-eight State Government Officials including 19 Zila Panchayat officials have been arrested and are in judicial custody. FIRs have been lodged in various police stations.

(d) The State Government has informed that the matter has been entrusted to the Corps of Detectives (C.O.D.) for conducting a thorough inquiry.